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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Blessed Father, thank You for motivating millions of Americans to pray for the women and men of this Senate and all of us who are privileged to work with them. Around the clock, prayers of intercession are prayed for the work of this Senate. Help us to remember that You are seeking to answer those prayers as the Senators are offered Your wisdom and guidance. Your mighty power is impinging on them as a result of people's prayers. An unlimited supply of supernatural strength and vision from You is ready to be released because of the faithful intercession of Your people. Grant the Senators a sense of awe and wonder and humility by realizing that their creativity comes from Your Spirit as a result of the prayers of the American people.

Help us to be ready to pray for each other here in the Senate family. We renew our commitment to pray not only for those with whom we agree, but also for those with whom we disagree, our political adversaries and those who test our patience. Bind us together as prayer partners as we deal with the diversity of ideas, for You are our Lord and Savior. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MIKE CRAPO, a Senator from the State of Idaho, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I understand the Democrat leader has a statement to make. Let me just say to our colleagues, we are going to take up the bill providing loan guarantees to those who would develop the technology and make the investments to bring local television to rural America. We expect there to be opening statements this morning. Let me say, since there is no one here on the other side to debate the issue, I intend at some point to ask unanimous consent that we might have an hour or so for opening statements and then I might be recognized to offer an amendment at that point. If there is an objection to that, then I will go ahead and offer an amendment at the conclusion of my statement.

Let me say we should have votes throughout the day. We are confident we will finish this bill today—or we hope to.

Following the disposition of this bill, there will be a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to the gasoline tax legislation. After the cloture vote, the Senate will begin a period of morning business with statements expected by Senator BROWNBACK on the marriage penalty.

I thank our colleagues for their attention.

Mr. President, before I go into a discussion of the bill, I ask unanimous consent I might yield to the Democrat leader to make a statement on his leadership time, and then that I might be recognized to make the initial opening statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, while the two managers of the bill are on the floor, the Senator from Texas asked that there be an hour for opening statements. The Senator from Maryland, the manager on the minority side, thinks that is a good idea.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, that being the case, let me ask unanimous consent, following the comments of the acting Democrat leader, that there be an hour equally divided for opening statements and that at the conclusion of that hour I be recognized to offer an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GAS TAX REPEAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to take a little while this morning to lay the foundation for a vote we will be taking later today. There is going to be a limited amount of time to talk about the cloture vote on the gas tax repeal.

No one is happy about the cost of gasoline in America today. It is something of which we are all aware, especially those of us on the west coast. In the State of Nevada, there are places where gas can cost more than \$2 a gallon. In California, that is the rule rather than the exception.

However, what the majority is attempting to do today, in moving this legislation forward, is something that should not take place. The bill was placed on the calendar under what we call rule XIV. That means it is acted on in an expedited fashion. It goes right here. It has not had a single hearing in the Finance Committee, the committee of jurisdiction. There is no companion bill that has passed the House. If this bill is passed by this body, only two things can happen: No. 1, it will lie here on the desk indefinitely; or, No. 2, it can be sent to the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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